

MARK-UP OF AMENDED CLAIMS

1. (Twice Amended) An orthopedic implant assembly, comprising
 - a) a stabilizing element having an anterior surface, a posterior surface, and at least one bore, the bore having a first opening in the anterior surface, a second opening in the posterior surface smaller than the first opening, and a transverse passageway extending from the first opening to the second opening;
 - b) a biased stopping member defining at least in part a reversibly expandable passageway having a smaller diameter configuration and a larger diameter configuration [and a posterior stopping surface]; and
 - c) a securing element having an elongated body, and a head at one end of the body and integral therewith, the head having a maximum diameter greater than the smaller diameter configuration of the passageway defined by the [biased] stopping member and greater than the second opening in the stabilizing element, so that the head is retained [by the posterior stopping surface of the stopping member] within the transverse passageway between the [biased] stopping member and the second opening in the stabilizing element.
29. (Cancelled)
30. (Thrice Amended) The attachment assembly of claim 120 wherein [the stopping member has]
the [second] first configuration of the stopping member has inner transverse dimensions that are smaller than transverse dimensions of the enlarged

integral portion of the securing member to facilitate retention of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion and

the [first] second configuration of the stopping member has inner transverse dimensions that are greater than transverse dimensions of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member to allow passage of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member into the posterior bore portion.

31. (Amended) The attachment assembly of claim [29] 120 wherein the securing member having an enlarged integral portion is slidably disposed within the bore.

36. (Cancelled)

37. (Thrice Amended) The attachment assembly of claim [36] 120 wherein the biased stopping member is a collar having at least in part a passageway enlargeable from a first inner dimension to a second inner dimension by the passage of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member therethrough.

43. (Amended) The attachment assembly of claim [29] 120 wherein the attachment member includes at least two bores.

44. (Amended) The attachment assembly of claim [29] 120 wherein the attachment member is configured to conform to and extend between at least two bone segments.

45. (Amended) The attachment assembly of claim [29] 120 wherein the posterior surface of the attachment member is at least in part a concave surface.

46. (Amended) The attachment assembly of claim [29] 120 wherein the attachment member is selected from the group consisting of rods and plates.

60. (Amended) The attachment assembly of claim [29] 120, wherein

- a. the enlarged integral portion of the elongated securing member has a curved posterior surface; and
- b. the posterior bore portion has a curved posterior surface configured to conform at least in part to part of the curved posterior surface of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member received by the bore.

63. (Thrice Amended) An orthopedic implant assembly, comprising:

- a. a stabilizing element having an anterior surface, a posterior surface, and at least one bore extending through the stabilizing element from the anterior surface to the posterior surface and the bore having an anterior bore portion and a posterior bore portion which has a posterior opening with a transverse dimension smaller than the transverse dimension of the anterior bore portion;
- b. a securing element which is configured to be slidably disposed within the bore of the stabilizing element and which has an elongated body and an enlarged integral portion; and
- c. a stopping member which is at least partially disposed within the bore of the stabilizing element, which has a posterior stopping surface, a first configuration within the bore allowing passage of the securing element into the posterior bore portion with the enlarged integral portion of the securing member disposed in the posterior bore portion posterior to the stopping member and a second configuration within the bore

which has smaller transverse dimensions than the first configuration to facilitate retention of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion of the stabilizing element [by the posterior stopping surface of the stopping member].

89. (Cancelled)

90. (Amended) The assembly of claim [89] 120 wherein the [radially deflectable member] stopping element comprises a biased collar.

91. (Thrice Amended) The assembly of claim 90 wherein the biased collar is elastically deformable to the [first] second configuration.

92. (Cancelled)

93. (Amended) The assembly of claim 91 wherein the biased collar extends at least partially within the bore of the stabilizing element [so that the enlarged integral portion of the securing element is retained within the posterior bore portion].

94. (Cancelled)

95. (Thrice Amended) The orthopedic implant assembly of claim [94] 121 wherein the biased enlarged portion of the securing element comprises at least one resilient [longitudinally deflectable] member that deflects longitudinally when the securing element is advanced posteriorly through the bore of the stabilizing element.

96. (Cancelled)

98. (Thrice Amended) The orthopedic implant assembly of claim [96] 125 wherein the biased stopping member elastically returns from the first configuration back to the second configuration.

99. (Amended) The assembly of claim [96] 125 wherein the biased stopping

member comprises a collar.

102. (Thrice Amended) The attachment assembly of claim [29] 120, wherein the stopping member is a biased stopping member which reduces a transverse configuration of the anterior bore portion to retain the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion of the attachment member.

104. (Cancelled)

105. (Amended) The attachment assembly of claim [104] 120 wherein the biased stopping member resiliently returns to the first configuration after passage of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member.

107. (Cancelled)

108. (Amended) The assembly of claim [107] 121 wherein the [compressible part of the] biased enlarged [integral] portion of the securing element comprises a biased collar.

109. (Cancelled)

110. (Cancelled)

111. (Amended) The assembly of claim [107] 121 wherein the compressible part of the enlarged [integral] portion of the securing element comprises at least one circumferentially disposed member.

112. (Amended) The assembly of claim 111 wherein the at least one circumferentially disposed member has a posterior end secured to the shaft of the securing element.

113. (Amended) The assembly of claim 112 wherein the securing element comprises a plurality of circumferentially disposed members having posterior ends

secured to the shaft of the securing element.

114. (Amended) The orthopedic attachment assembly of claim [29] 120 wherein the posterior bore portion has a length sufficiently greater than the length of the enlarged integral portion of the securing [member] element so that the enlarged integral portion of the securing [member] element is longitudinally displaceable within the posterior bore portion when retained therein.

115. (Amended) [An] The orthopedic attachment assembly of claim 120 wherein, [comprising:]

- a. [an] the elongated securing [member having] element has an enlarged integral portion with a length, a posterior surface and a transverse dimension and a shaft extending from the enlarged integral portion configured to be secured within bone;
- b. [an] the attachment [member] element [which] has an anterior surface and a posterior surface and [which] has at least one bore extending through the attachment [member] element from the anterior surface to the posterior surface and is configured to receive the securing [member] element, the bore having an anterior bore portion, a posterior bore portion having at least one transverse dimension smaller than the transverse dimension of the enlarged integral portion of the securing [member] element to retain the enlarged integral portion of the securing [member] element within the posterior bore portion; and

c. [[a]] the stopping member [which has a posterior stopping surface, a first configuration that allows the enlarged integral portion of the securing member to pass into the posterior bore portion and a second configuration that facilitates retention of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion by the posterior stopping surface and which] defines at least in part a length of the posterior bore portion that is longer than the length of the enlarged integral portion of the securing [member] to allow longitudinal displacement of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion.

116. (Amended) The orthopedic attachment assembly of claim 115 wherein the securing member has a portion posterior to the enlarged integral [head] portion that has a transverse dimension smaller than a transverse dimension of an opening in the posterior bore portion to provide angular displacement of the securing member within the posterior bore portion.

117. (Amended) The orthopedic attachment assembly of claim 115 wherein the [first] second configuration of the stopping member has a transverse dimension that is larger than the transverse dimension of the stopping member [is] in the [second] first configuration.

120. (New) An orthopedic attachment assembly, comprising:

- a. an elongated securing element having an enlarged integral portion with a length, an anterior surface, a posterior surface and a transverse dimension;

- b. an attachment element which has an anterior surface and a posterior surface and which has at least one bore extending through the attachment element from the anterior surface to the posterior surface and is configured to receive the securing element, the bore having an anterior bore portion, and a posterior bore portion, the posterior bore portion having at least one transverse dimension smaller than the transverse dimension of the enlarged integral portion of the securing element to facilitate retention of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion; and
- c. a biased stopping member which has a posterior stopping surface, a first configuration which extends within the bore that is elastically deformed to a second configuration as the enlarged portion of the securing member passes into the posterior bore portion, the biased stopping member returning to the first configuration upon passage of the enlarged integral portion into the posterior bore portion, the posterior stopping surface of the biased stopping member configured to engage with the anterior surface of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member facilitating retention of the enlarged portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion of the attachment member.

121. (New) An orthopedic attachment assembly, comprising:

- a. an elongated securing member having a biased enlarged portion with a length, an anterior surface, a posterior surface and a transverse dimension;

- b. an attachment member which has an anterior surface and a posterior surface and which has at least one bore extending through the attachment member from the anterior surface to the posterior surface and is configured to receive the securing member, the bore having an anterior bore portion, a posterior bore portion having at least one transverse dimension smaller than the transverse dimension of the biased enlarged portion of the securing member to facilitate retention of the enlarged portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion; and
- c. a stopping member which has an anterior surface, and a posterior stopping surface which extends within the bore;
- d. the biased enlarged portion of the securing member is elastically deformed from a first configuration to a second configuration as the biased enlarged portion passes the stopping member during the passage of the biased enlarged portion of the securing member into the posterior bore portion of the attachment member, the biased enlarged portion of the securing member returning to the first configuration after passage of the biased enlarged portion into the posterior bore portion of the attachment member, engagement of the posterior stopping surface of the stopping member with the anterior surface of the biased enlarged portion of the securing member facilitating retention of the biased enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion of the attachment member.

122. (New) An orthopedic attachment assembly, comprising:

- a. an elongated securing element having an enlarged portion with a length, an anterior surface a posterior surface and a transverse dimension;
- b. an attachment which has an anterior surface and a posterior surface and which has at least one bore extending through the attachment member from the anterior surface to the posterior surface and is configured to receive the securing member, the bore having an anterior bore portion, a posterior bore portion having at least one transverse dimension smaller than the transverse dimension of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member; and
- c. a plurality of biased stopping members that are part of the attachment member which have posterior stopping surfaces, a first configuration that extend within the bore and that are elastically deformed by the passage of the enlarged portion of the securing member to a second configuration to allow passage of the enlarged portion of the securing member into the posterior bore portion, the biased stopping members returning to the first configuration upon passage of the enlarged portion and the posterior stopping surfaces configured to engage the anterior surface of the securing member facilitating retention of the enlarged portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion of the attachment member.

123. (New) The orthopedic implant assembly of claim 122 wherein the stopping element comprises one or more contractible fingers.

124. (New) The orthopedic implant assembly of claim 122 wherein the plurality

of biased stopping members comprise resilient longitudinally deflectable members which have first un-deflected configurations within the anterior bore portion and deflected configurations which allow the enlarged integral head of the securing member to pass into the posterior bore portion, the one or more deflectable members having posterior surfaces that are configured to engage an anterior surface of the enlarged integral head of the securing member to prevent the back-out of the integral head of the securing element from the posterior bore of the stabilizing element and facilitate retention of the enlarged integral head of securing element within the posterior bore portion.

125. (New) An orthopedic implant assembly, comprising:
 - a. a stabilizing element having an anterior surface, a posterior surface, and at least one bore extending through the stabilizing element from the anterior surface to the posterior surface with an anterior bore portion which has a transverse dimension, a posterior bore portion which has a posterior opening with a transverse dimension smaller than the transverse dimension of the anterior bore portion;
 - b. a securing element having an elongated body and an enlarged integral portion having an anterior surface; and
 - c. a biased stopping member which has a posterior stopping surface, which has a first configuration within the anterior bore portion that has a first transverse dimension and is elastically deformable to a second configuration within the anterior bore portion that has a second transverse dimension larger than the first transverse dimension that allows the

enlarged integral portion of the securing element to pass into the posterior bore portion posterior to the biased stopping member, the biased stopping member returning to the first configuration so that the posterior surface of the stopping member is positioned to engage the anterior surface of the securing element and prevents the securing element from backing out of the posterior bore portion and to facilitate retention of the enlarged integral portion of the securing element within the posterior bore portion.

126. (New) The assembly of claim 120 wherein at least one of the anterior surface of the head and the posterior stopping surface of the stopping member are perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the bore.